

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6205

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR, FI, SP

SUBJECT: SPANISH FOREIGN MINISTER MAKES SUCCESSFUL VISIT
TO FINLAND

BEGIN SUMMARY. SPANISH FOREIGN MINISTER LOPEZ BRAVO
MADE A GOOD IMPRESSION IN FINLAND DURING HIS MAY 28-30
OFFICIAL VISIT, THE FIRST BY SO HIGH- LEVEL SPANISH
OFFICIAL SINCE BEFORE THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR. HIS THEME
THAT NO SITUATION IS STATIC WAS RECEIVED SYMPATHETICALLY.
TRADE MATTERS DOMINATED DISCUSSIONS. AN AIR TRAFFIC
AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED. LOPEZ BRAVO MET TOP- LEVEL
OFFICIALS, INCLUDING PRESIDENT KEKKONEN. FINNS THOUGHT
TIMING OF VISIT FORTUITOUS BECAUSE CSCE CONTEXT
TOO STING OUT OF POTENTIAL OPPOSITION TO VISIT. THERE
WAS ONLY ONE SMALL DEMONSTRATION AGAINST SPANISH REGIME,
WITH LOPEZ BRAVO VISIT SPECIFICALLY EXEMPTED FROM
CONDEMNATION. END SUMMARY.

1. SPANISH FOREIGN MINISTER LOPEZ BRAVO' S 3- DAY OFFICIAL
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VISIT TO FINLAND, WHICH BEGAN ON MAY 28, TOOK PLACE IN A CORDIAL ATMOSPHERE. IT WAS THE FIRST VISIT OF THIS LEVEL SINCE BEFORE THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR. VIRTUALLY NO ADVANCE PUBLICITY WAS GIVEN THE VISIT UNTIL SHORTLY BEFORE THE SPANIARD'S ARRIVAL. POTENTIALLY DEMONSTRATORS WERE THUS CAUGHT LARGELY UNAWARES.

THE ONLY MANIFESTATION AGAINST SPAIN OCCURRED THE EVENING OF LOPEZ BRAVO'S FIRST DAY AT AN ALREADY SCHEDULED RALLY OF YOUTH GROUPS PARTICIPATING IN THE UPCOMING BERLIN WORLD YOUTH FESTIVAL. SEVERAL HUNDRED YOUNG PEOPLE REPRESENTING YOUTH GROUPS ACROSS THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM ISSUED A CONDEMNATION OF SPAIN AND PORTUGAL, DEMANDING AMNESTY FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS, A FREE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT, THE REOPENING OF UNIVERSITIES AND FREEDOM OF ACTION FOR STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS. THE DECLARATION STRESSED, HOWEVER, THAT IT WAS NOT AN EXPRESSION OF OPPOSITION TO THE VISIT OF LOPEZ BRAVO. THIS POST-SCRIPT WAS APPARENTLY INCLUDED AT THE INSISTENCE OF SOME OF THE NON-SOCIALIST YOUTH GROUPS.

2. LOPEZ BRAVO AND HIS PARTY, WHICH INCLUDED MIGUEL SOLANO AZA, CHIEF OF THE MFA EUROPEAN DEPARTMENT, REIMONDO BASSOLS, CHIEF OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC RELATIONS, AND CHIEF OF CHANCERY SANTIAGO MARTINEZ- CARO, WERE ACCORDED FULL HONORS. THE DELEGATION WAS MET AT THE AIRPORT BY FINNISH FOREIGN MINISTER AHTI KARJALAINEN, THE PRESIDENT'S CHIEF AIDE AND SEVERAL HIGH RANKING FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS. DURING HIS VISIT, LOPEZ BRAVO HAD DISCUSSIONS WITH KARJALAINEN, PRESIDENT KEKKONEN, FOREIGN TRADE MINISTER JERMI LAINEN AND PRIME MINISTER KALEVI SORSA. DISCUSSIONS REVOLVED PRIMARILY AROUND TRADE MATTERS. AN AIR-TRAFFIC AGREEMENT BETWEEN FINLAND AND SPAIN WAS ALSO SIGNED. IN SEVERAL SPEECHES LOPEZ BRAVO PRAISED FINNISH FOREIGN POLICY, PARTICULARLY ITS ROLE IN CONNECTION WITH THE CSCE AND ADDED THAT SPAIN "DESIRES THAT THIS CAPITAL SHOULD GO ON BEING THE SEAT OF THE CONFERENCE ITSELF". FULL TEXT BEING POUCHED TO EUR/NE.

3. NO COMMUNIQUE WAS ISSUED AT THE END OF THE VISIT. THE FINNISH FOREIGN MINISTER RECEIVED AN INVITATION TO VISIT SPAIN.

4. THE LOPEZ BRAVO VISIT WAS INSTIGATED BY THE SPANIARDS, ACCORDING TO FONMIN SOURCES, DURING THE EXCHANGE OF VISITS DURING THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES' LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RESPECTIVE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN TRADE AND DURING THE PRIVATE VISIT TO FINLAND SEVERAL YEARS AGO OF FRANCO'S DAUGHTER. FINLAND IS PATENTLY THE ONLY NORDIC COUNTRY TO WHICH SUCH A HIGH LEVEL SPANISH OFFICIAL WOULD BE WELCOME, GIVEN THE PREVAILING ANTI-FRANCO SENTIMENTS IN THE OTHER COUNTRIES. A HIGH-LEVEL FONMIN SOURCE TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER THAT BEFORE FORMALIZING THE INVITATION TO LOPEZ BRAVO THE FINNS HAD QUERIED THEIR NORDIC

NEIGHBORS WHETHER SIMILAR SPANISH VISITS HAD OR WOULD TAKE PLACE IN THOSE COUNTRIES AND RECEIVED RESPONDING NEGATIVES FROM ALL QUARTERS. OUR SOURCE THOUGHT THE TIMING OF THE LOPEZ BRAVO VISIT HERE WAS FORTUITOUS BECAUSE EVEN FINNISH OPPONENTS OF THE SPANISH REGIME COULD SEE THE LOGIC OF A SURVEY VISIT BY A FOREIGN MINISTER WHO WOULD SHORTLY BE COMING TO FINLAND FOR THE CSCE MINISTERIAL OPENING. HE ADDED THAT FINLAND HAS A SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT POLICY TOWARD SPAIN THAN ITS NEIGHBORS, WHICH HE OPED WOULD BE RECOGNIZED AS PART OF FINLAND'S POLICY OF NEUTRALITY.

5. LOPEZ BRAVO MADE A GOOD IMPRESSION ON THOSE HE MET. A NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH WHOM WE HAVE TALKED WHO WERE INVOLVED WITH THE VISIT WERE FAVORABLY STRUCK BY THE SPANISH FOREIGN MINISTER'S REITERATION OF THE THEME THAT THE WORLD IS CHANGING, THAT NOTHING IS STATIC, THAT NEW POLICIES ARE BEING DEVELOPED DAILY. SEVERAL SAGELY COMMENTED THAT LOPEZ BRAVO IS A LIBERAL. THEY ALSO EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN FOR HIS POLITICAL SURVIVABILITY, GIVEN THE MORE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN SPAIN. KREHBIEL

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